



Anguilla rostrata

American eel

General

1. Pelagic, facultatively catadromous: freshwater, estuary, marine, stream
2. Susceptible to infection by the parasitic nematode, *Anguillicola crassus*, which infests the swim bladder

Geography and Habitat

1. Native range: Spawns in the Sargasso Sea of the Atlantic Ocean, ascending rivers in North and South America in maturity. Native to the Atlantic, Lake Ontario, Mississippi, and Gulf basins and from Newfoundland to South Dakota and through to South America.
2. Habitats
 - Slower growing in freshwater than estuarine and marine
 - Long lived, maturity may take up to 40 years for stream dwelling females
 - Carnivorous and scavengers. This allows a broad range of suitable habitat
 - Capable of absorbing oxygen through gills or skin, allowing movement over wetlands, mud, and stream barriers



<http://nas.er.usgs.gov/queries/FactSheet.aspx?SpeciesID=310>

Invasion Pathways

1. Released as unwanted food by shipping vessels in the great lakes
2. Stocked in Illinois rivers draining into Lake Michigan
3. Natural dispersal through the Welland canal into Lake Erie following the construction of the lock systems throughout between the lakes. The first recording of *Anguilla rostrata* above Lake Ontario was in 1844.
4. Ballast water introduction of immature eels

Sources

1. <http://nas.er.usgs.gov/queries/FactSheet.aspx?SpeciesID=310>
2. <http://www.fws.gov/northeast/newsroom/facts.html>